Penalty on airlines on cancellation of flights

3412. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to impose heavy penalities on any domestic or international airlines who cancel their scheduled flights without proper intimation except bad climate;

(b) if so, by when it will be started; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) There is presently no proposal to impose heavy penalties on any domestic or international airlines in the event of cancellation of flights. The present international air law as established by Warsaw Convention and Montreal Convention, 1999 envisage only a measure of facilitation and do not contemplate any punitive action against airlines in case of cancellation/postponement of flights. Most airlines in India already have procedures in place for providing standard passenger facilitation measures in the event of delay/postponement of flights and do everything within their means to ensure that stranded passengers are not inconvenienced. Besides, because of the very nature of the air transportation industry, safety considerations have to be given foremost priority and reasons for delay of the flights are often beyond the control of the airlines. Any punitive provision may also end up increasing the cost of air travel considerably as airlines may be compelled to pass on a part of the financial burden to the passengers.

Operation of small airstrips

3413. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to enhance and make small airstrips operational in various parts of the country for flying of small passenger and cargo planes;

(b) if so, the details thereof and how many districts will get benefit by air connectivity in the country; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?